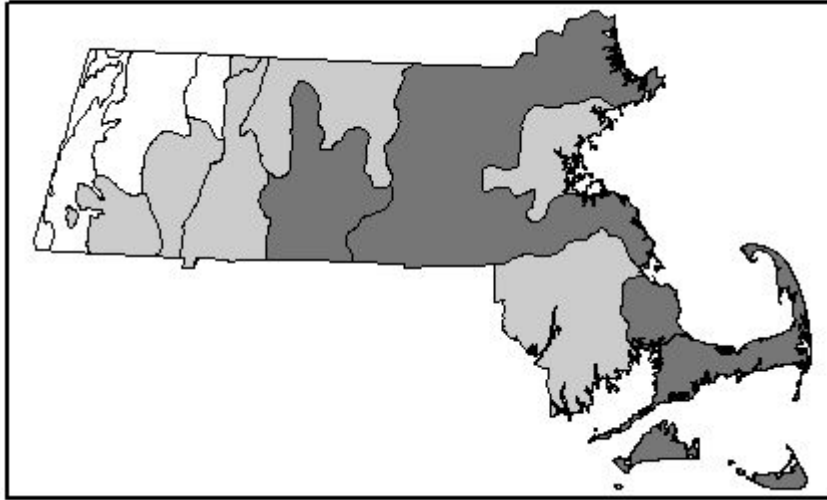


Community Name: BLACK OAK - SCARLET OAK FOREST / WOODLAND
Community Code: CT1A3B0000
SRANK: S3S4



Concept: A fairly open oak / heath forest community maintained by regular light fire.

Environmental Setting: A community of dry, sandy or rocky slopes, but also on other xeric sites. Grades into mixed oak and pine-oak forests, and more open communities. Except on the driest sites, without regular fire the community tends to change to include more white oak, chestnut oak, red oak, and hickories. Without fire, there tends to be deep oak leaf litter with slow decomposition.

Vegetation Description: Black oak (*Quercus velutina*) and scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) are the dominant canopy species. White oak (*Q. alba*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) are common associates. A sparse subcanopy may have species of recent disturbance such as grey birch (*Betula populifolia*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), as well as species less tolerant of fire such as flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) or shadbush (*Amelanchier arborea*). Lowbush blueberries, (*Vaccinium angustifolium* and *V. pallidum*), huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), and scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*) form a fairly dense, but clumped low shrub layer, with scattered maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) and American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*). Sedges (such as *Carex pensylvanica*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), and pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*) are often scattered in the open herbaceous layer. On Martha's Vineyard, black oak grows with white oak (*Q. alba*) and post oak (*Q. stellata*) in open, savanna-like woodlands with dense heath understories, in mosaics with grasslands, heathlands, and scrub oak communities.

Associations: Part of a continuum of dry, acidic communities that contain a variety of tree oak and pine species. More work is needed to define types.

Habitat Values for Associated Fauna: Black oak acorns are important food for white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), other small rodents, and Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) and other birds. The understory of blueberries and huckleberries is used by many of these same species in areas with sufficiently large forests to provide all the habitat needs. Passerine birds of oak forests include Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), Great Crested Flycatcher (*Miarchus crinitus*), and Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*).

Associated Rare Plants:
NONE KNOWN

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Associated Rare Animals:

APODREPANULATRIX LIBERARIA	NEW JERSEY TEA INCHWORM	T
RHODOECIA AURANTIAGO	ORANGE SALLOW MOTHS	T

Examples with Public Access:

Green Hill Park, Worcester; Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Worcester; Quabog WMA, Brookfield; Manuel F. Correllus State Forest, Martha's Vineyard.

Threats:

fire suppression, severe wildfire, and exotics.

Management Needs:

Prescribed fire, exotic removal.

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC:

Quercus velutina - Q. alba Forest Alliance -- Quercus coccinea- Q. velutina/ Sassafras albidum/ Vaccinium pallidum Forest [CEGL006375].

MA (old name):

BLACK OAK SAVANNA.

ME:

Not described.

NH:

Part of: 1997 - Dry Rich Appalachian oak- hickory- forest, Appalachian oak/ heath variant.

VT:

Part of: Dry oak Woodlands.

NY:

part of: Appalachian Oak - pine forest.

CT:

Quercus velutina - (Quercus prinus) Forests -- Quercus velutina/ Gaylussacia baccata community and Quercus velutina / Vaccinium pallidum community.

RI:

Mixed oak - pine forest.

Weatherbee:

Not described.

Author:

P. Swain

Date:

8/23/99